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From a mathematical student's point of view the book is a clear, simple, and educative treatment of the fundamental problems of surveying, From this same point of view we ought to have a larger number of such mathematical texts as this, and a much smaller number of the logic-tight sort for early college students.

G. W. MYERS.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO,
School of Education.

Advanced Course in Algebra. By WEBSTER WELLS. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Pp. vii+581.

TO UNDERTAKE to say anything to the mathematical public of the central West about a Wells algebra is to undertake to tell that public something of which it is already well aware. Commendation of this text which, if it does not succeed with the mathematical public, is the only one of an old and numerous series that will have failed, must perforce be stale and commonplace. Criticism of such a book opens the critic to the danger of being charged with iconoclasm. The writer herewith disclaims the possession of any desire to pose either as an educational reformer or as a public nuisance, if there be any difference between the two types. Suffice it to say that the present book is characterized by about the same proportion of merits and demerits as the rest of the series. In fact, the author tells us the present book "follows in the main the author's *College Algebra*."

This book timidly introduces the subject of graphical representation in chapter 14. Two things are suggested at this point. First, it is not the elements of analytical geometry, or graphical representation, *per se*, that is so much needed in the algebra as it is graphical algebra. Less fussiness about the matter of getting ready to represent things graphically, and more graphing equations is desired without any philosophical talk about the scheme itself. The second thing is that there is no very important reason for graphs in algebra, unless they come in time to do some good in the way of illuminating equations and algebraic expressions. The pupil is familiarized, at the very beginning of algebra, with the method of displaying on a horizontal or vertical straight line the positive and negative series of numbers toward one side and the other from a point marked zero. It is easy enough for even the first-year high-school boy, or girl, to see that, if the zero of a horizontal and of a vertical line be brought together, we have at once a scheme for keeping separate on the same drawing any two different magnitudes, by measuring one magnitude off parallel to the vertical and the other parallel to the horizontal. This is all that is either necessary or desirable at the outset, since the center of gravity of attention should be on learning the equation—not on learning graphing. With such procedure we should then have a scheme for making the solution of simultaneous equations mean something worth while to the pupil. The author evidently dissents from this view.

The most conspicuous frailty of the book consists in overexplanation. Cautions, suggestions, and explanatory remarks to the minutest detail, whenever any new element enters in any form, make work practically prohibitive of thought on the student's part. Such study will result perhaps in a perspicuous, but withal a static, frame of mind on the part of the learner. He sinks into a mere manipulator. He will come to understand what others have done and explained for him, and will add to his power

to do this; but far more important is it that the pupil should be gradually trained to be a productive thinker, a dynamic factor in the process. As an agency in producing the latter attitude toward mathematical study the text before us leaves much to be desired. May the text on algebra speedily appear which will get the thinking done by the pupil, without first doing it all for him!

G. W. MYERS.

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BOOKS RECEIVED.

Our Birds and Their Nestlings. By MARGARET COULSON WALKER. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 222. $0.60.

A Brief German Course. By C. F. KAYSER, PH.D., AND F. MONTESER, PH.D. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp.363. $1.20.

The School Chemistry: A New Text-Book for High Schools and Academies. By ELROY M. AVERY. PH.D., LL.D. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 423. $1.20

Elements of Algebra: For Beginners. By GEORGE W. HULL. Pp. 159. $0.50.

Elementary Grammar. By WILLIAM H. MAXWELL, M.A., LL.D. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 208. $0.40.

Forms of English Poetry. By CHARLES F. JOHNSON, L.H.D. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 368. $1.

Five Little Strangers. By JULIA AUGUSTA SCHWARTZ. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 176. $0.40.

Grammar School Algebra. By A. W. POTTER. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 152. $0.50.

Longer French Poems. Selected and Prepared for School Use, with an Introductory Treatise on French Versification. By T. ATKINSON JENKINS, PHD. Pp. 175. —.—.

Grammar School Algebra. By DAVID EUGENE SMITH, PH.D. Chicago: Ginn & Co. Pp. 154. List price, $0.50; mailing price, $0.55.

Nature Study with Common Things. By M. H. CARTER. Chicago: American Book Co. Pp. 150. $0.60.

Out of the Northland: Stories from the Northern Myths. By EMILIE KIP BAKER. New York: The Macmillan Co. Pp. 165. $0.25.

The Heroes of Asgard. By A. AND E. KEARY. Revised and abridged by CHARLES H. MORSS. New York: The Macmillan Co. Pp. 221. $0.25.

The First Book of Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene of the Human Body. By J. A. CULLER, PH.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. Pp. 148.

The Second Book of Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene of the Human Body. By J. A. CULLER, PH.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. Pp. 275.

The Third Book of Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene of the Human Body. By J. A. CULLER, PH.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. Pp. 364.

The Elements of English Grammar. By W. F. WEBSTER, assisted by ALICE WOODWORTH COOLEY. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Pp. 223.

Education in Religion and Morals. By GEORGE ALBERT COE. Chicago: Fleming H. Revell. Pp. 434. —.—.

The Students' Series of Latin Classics. Latin Hymns. By WILLIAM A. MERRILL. Boston: Benj. H. Sanborn. Pp. 86.